

June 20, 2005



HOME NEWS TRIBUNE

63°F
Partly Sunny
[Forecast »](#)

NEWS THAT HITS HOME IN CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

[Search Archive](#)[Search the Wire](#)

Top Stories

Central Jersey
Obituaries
Community
Life In...
Central Jersey Guide
Rutgers University
State
Science

Sunday Best

News to Use
Send a News Tip
Corrections

Special Reports

Campaign 2005
Making Marines
Elias
Black History

Sports

Professional
Collegiate
Rutgers
Scholastic
All-Area Teams
Scholastic Photos

Art & Life

Couples
Women On the Run
Seniors
Kid Stuff
Pets
Food & Dining
Health & Fitness
Home & Garden
Faith & Ethics
Entertainment
New York
Books
Travel

Business

Stock Quotes
At Work
Real Estate
e Technology

Opinion

IMMIGRATION GLITCH SPLIT FAMILY

Dad won't be sad this Father's Day

Published in the Home News Tribune 06/19/05

By [RICK MALWITZ](#)
STAFF WRITER

EDISON — On the first Father's Day during which his family is whole, the happiest word Farook Fiyaz will hear today will be *waapa*, a word in the Tamil language of his native Sri Lanka that sounds something like the familiar "papa."

The word will be spoken by Aadhil Ahamed Fiyaz, his talkative and energetic 21-month-old son, who spent last Father's Day in Sri Lanka, trapped by U.S. immigration law.

Fiyaz did not see his son until November, after the office of Sen. Jon Corzine, D-N.J., cut through the red tape, allowing the child to join his parents in an emotional gathering at Newark Liberty International Airport.

"I am so happy this year," said Fiyaz, playing with his son in their living room.

"Last year all we did was cry," he recalled, when he and his wife were home alone on Father's Day,

with their infant son half a world away.

Not only will Fiyaz and his wife, Noorul Haseena Fiyaz, have a son to embrace today, they also have a daughter, Aamina Fiyaz, born Dec. 12 at Saint Peter's University Hospital in New Brunswick, without any international intrigue.

"A son and a daughter. We are now a happy family," said Fiyaz, who was granted political asylum by the United States in 2002.

He gained asylum after having been married to Noorul — an arranged marriage that took place during a telephone connection between New Jersey and Sri Lanka on Jan. 18, 2002.

Fiyaz went to the Far East the following January, meeting his family on neutral soil in India, since he is not allowed re-entry into Sri Lanka. When he and his wife celebrated their wedding in January 2003, it was the first time they had actually met — apart from phone calls and e-mails.

During their month together in India, Noorul became pregnant with their first child, and the couple had plans to settle in Central New Jersey.

In February 2003, back in the United States, Fiyaz applied for a visa for his wife; the visa was granted on Sept. 23, 2003. She made immediate plans to come to the United States, purchasing an airline ticket for a Sept. 28 flight at 2 a.m., two weeks before her due date.

However, on Sept. 27, she went into labor and at 9 p.m. she delivered Aadhil.

According to the letter of the law, a person granted political asylum could only bring to the



JASON TOWLEN/Staff photographer

Farook Fiyaz sits with his 21-month-old son Aadhil Ahamed Fiyaz in his family's Edison home on Wednesday.

- advertisements -

**Nuestra
Comunidad
LA VOZ LATINA**

Español

- Nuestra Comunidad

Circulation

- Customer Service
- Subscribe online
- Make extra money
- Get USA Today

Careers

- Career Builder
- Local
- National
- At THNT

Real Estate

- Residential
- Commercial
- Vacation
- NewHomeNetwork

Marketplace

- Advertise in Print
- Advertise Online
- Classifieds
- Special Sections
- Celebrations
- Buy or sell a car
- Buy or sell a boat
- Buy or sell stuff
- Go out to eat
- Online Coupons

EZclassifieds

Special Deals

- Win great prizes!
- Buy HNT merchandise
- Buy keepsake books



Web Extras

- New Jersey Lottery
- Lotteries Elsewhere
- Teen Scene Club
- Kid Stuff Club
- Expanded Weather
- Comics
- USA Weekend
- Dating

NIE

- Main Page
- Activities Calendar
- For Teachers
- For Sponsors

Gannett New Jersey

Editorials
Letters
Student Voices
Columnists
Rick Malwitz
David Harris
Charles Paolino
Tammy Paolino
Bob Ingle
Chris Jordan
Ava Gacser
Laurie Granieri
Michael Riley
Teen Scene
Features
Calendar
Sports
Opinion
Reviews
Spotlight
Recreation
Fishing
Running
Bowling
Pulse
Music
Movies
Art
Comedy
Theater & Dance
Festivals
Dining
Page X
Etc.
Photos
Staff Showcase
Reprints
Services
About Us
Contact Us
Jobs with Us

United States a spouse or children with whom the person had an existing relationship, when the application for asylum was made.

Fiyaz had had a relationship with his wife, to whom he had been married, over the phone.

Not only did he not have an existing relationship with his son, his son had not yet been conceived.

Had Noorul taken that Sept. 28 flight to the United States, and delivered her child on American soil, there would have been no problem. Instead, he was born hours before the scheduled flight.

"I guess he wanted to see Sri Lanka," said Fiyaz, who can joke about it now.

Meanwhile, another clock was ticking, for his wife. Her visa was to expire Jan. 22, 2004. If she remained in Sri Lanka with her newborn son, she would have had to begin the application process again with no guarantees. But if she left before Jan. 22, she would not be allowed to bring her newborn son.

She chose to leave, and the couple figured it would just be a matter of time before they could send for their son.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) — which took over the role of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on March 1, 2003 — rejected the Fiyazes' numerous pleas.

However, Fiyaz had the good fortune to work at a factory in Somerset, where Charlie Quicksall of Hightstown was his supervisor.

Fiyaz explained his problem, and showed Quicksall letters he'd written to the USCIS, and the constant rejections. Quicksall offered to write letters, putting his words atop Fiyaz's signature.

"I tried to put myself in his place," said Quicksall.

They sent letters to congressmen, to New Jersey's two U.S. senators and to the Department of Homeland Security.

"We even wrote to President Bush. How could it hurt?" said Quicksall.

Quicksall also contacted the Home News Tribune, explaining Fiyaz's story.

Quicksall recalled that the office of Sen. Corzine contacted Fiyaz, and promised to read the story in the newspaper. After the story appeared last year on Father's Day, Fiyaz got a call from David York, who worked in Corzine's office at the time. He went to bat for Fiyaz.

With York's aid, an application was made to the USCIS for humanitarian parole, a process that allows entrance into the United States for what the Department of Homeland Security calls "urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit."

"They had done everything right, they just fell through a loophole in the law," York explained, when he joined the couple at the airport in November for the emotional meeting the day the child entered the country accompanied by Fiyaz's brother-in-law, Mohamed Faizel.

The boy, then 14 months old, had been prepared for the moment by being shown pictures of his parents and hearing their voices on the telephone.

Fiyaz had begun his journey in 1996, when he fled Sri Lanka for Canada, and lived with friends in Saskatoon. Life had been unbearable in Sri Lanka when people he describes as "terrorists" began demanding money from the hardware store his family owned.

He applied for political asylum in Canada, but was rejected.

He came to the United States and his application for political asylum was accepted. He has since applied for his green card, with his sights set on becoming an American citizen.

Fiyaz now works in the maintenance department at the Sheraton at Woodbridge Place in Woodbridge. When he arrives home from work, he sets aside an hour or so to play with his son.

- Asbury Park Press
- Courier Post
- Daily Record
- Courier News
- Ocean County Observer
- The Daily Journal



"Even if I get home at midnight I get him up and we play," he said.

Last week, Quicksall recalled the article in the Home News Tribune that got the attention of Sen. Corzine's office.

"I remember the pictures of him last year, and now I think how different it will be for him this year, for Father's Day," said Quicksall. "It really ends like a fairy tale."

Rick Malwitz:

(732) 565-7291;

rmalwitz@thnt.com

00000

To e-mail this article, enter the following information:

Recipient's e-mail:

Your name:

Your comments:

[Subscribe Now! to the Home News Tribune. It's EZ.](#)

EZ Classifieds
ad placement online

cars.com

careerbuilder.com

Homes IN Jersey.com

apartments.com

Copyright ©2005 Home News Tribune Online. All rights reserved.
Use of this site indicates your agreement to the [Home News Tribune Online Terms of Service](#)
(Terms updated May 5, 2005)